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13TH SON

AND
SOME
OTHER
PARABLES

BY
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PITTSBURGH
The Lessing Company

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THE PARABLE OF THE THIRTEENTH SON

ACERTAIN man had thirteen sons.

Now the stargazers and the soothsayers and the wise women declared with a loud voice that thirteen was an unlucky number. And they prophesied that the thirteenth son would be pursued by misfortune, and there would be no place for him in the land of his birth.

But his father said: It is not my fault that my wife is a fruitful vine and Malthus a true prophet. Howsoever the Lord will provide.

Then the first son said: I will be a King or whatever ye choose to call me, Czar or President or Duke, for ye must have some one to rule over ye, and sit upon a throne, and give ye ribbons to wear in your button-holes.

Then the second son said: I will be a General, a soldier to do your fighting, in case anyone comes to take away the throne of your king, or saith he is bow-legged and cross-eyed and his crown a misfit.

Then the third son said: I will be an Admiral and carry the totem of our family to foreign lands, where the natives may behold its glory. Also when the King and the General may decide to go to war, I will carry them across the seas to kill other families and bring home the spoils thereof.

Then the fourth son said: I will be a Bishop, and save all your souls. I will tell ye exactly what God

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wishes ye to do, and I will tell God what rewards ye expect. I will bless the crown of the King, and the cannon of the General, and the totem of the Admiral, so that they will prevail over all their enemies who sell goods too cheaply.

Then the fifth son said: I will be a Senator, and will make laws for ye all, so that ye will know what ye must do and what ye may not do, how to do it and how not to do it, when and wherewith and whereinbefore.

Then the sixth son said: I will be a Lawyer, and will tell ye how to elude and circumvent the laws made by the Senator.

Then the seventh son said: I will be a Policeman, and arrest ye if ye break the laws of the Senator, unless my brother the Lawyer hath taught ye the manner thereof.

Then the eighth son said: I will be a Tax Collector, and will make ye to pay revenue when ye buy anything in another city, and will make ye to pay a portion of all ye produce at home, that the King may have money to gild his crown, and the General to buy powder, and the Admiral to dye his totem, and the Bishop to build a temple, and the Senator to patch his toga, and the Lawyer to pay his jurymen, and the Policeman that he may not require to commit burglary, and myself for inspecting, appraising, assessing and levying upon ye, and relieving ye of your surplus, which would cause ye much worry and bring ye into many temptations.

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Then the ninth son said: I will be a Banker, and will guard your money when ye do not need it, and will lend it to you at interest when ye do need it.

Then the tenth son said: I will be a Salesman and Advertising Expert, to cause ye to buy what ye do not require, to persuade ye to buy more than ye require, to keep ye from buying better and cheaper substitutes, and to flatter ye for the taste displayed in buying the goods that I sell.

Then the eleventh son said: I will be a Movie Actor, and will look handsome, and will drink champagne, and will have seven wives, and will never need to think, and will get a million dollars a year to keep all other people from thinking.

Then the twelfth son said: I will be an Editor, to tell ye all about the Movie Actor's divorces, and the excellence of the motor cars the Salesman sells, and the Banker's philanthropy, and the Tax Collector's patriotic function, and the Policeman's majesty, and the Lawyer's eloquence, and the Senator's wisdom, and the Bishop's holiness, and how many ships the Admiral hath sunk, and how many cities the General hath burnt, and why ye must hate the people in those ships and cities, because your King is greater than their King, and your Totem more beautiful than their Totem, and your Bishop's God more sublime than their Bishop's God. And I will explain how all this hath come to pass, which is Civilization.

Then the thirteenth son said: I know not what I shall do. For I am the thirteenth son. And the

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stargazers and soothsayers and wise women have declared that thirteen is an unfortunate number.

Then his brothers of one accord said unto him: Be of good cheer, for thou art our brother, and we will find thee something to do. The King needeth someone to keep his crown polished, and the General cannot make his own cannon. Thou mayest build a Dreadnaught for the Admiral and a Cathedral for the Bishop. Thou must vote for the Senator, and thou shalt make the cloth of the Lawyer's coat. The Policeman requireth thee to exercise his right arm, and the Tax Collector must assess some one who cannot dodge him or secure exemption. The Banker needeth thee for a depositor, and the Salesman cannot sell anything unless thou producest it. The Movie Actor must have somebody to gaze upon him; the Editor somebody to believe the words of his pen. All of them must be fed; thou shalt furnish the food. All of them must be housed; thou shalt build the homes. All of them must be warmed; thou shalt dig the coal. Thus, verily, thou dost not live in vain, even though thou art the thirteenth son!

Whereupon the thirteenth son rejoiced greatly that the curse was lifted, and that there was a place even for him in the land of his birth, where he might partake in the blessings of civilization and enjoy the luxury of labor. And to this day the Thirteenth Son dwelleth among us, and he knoweth that the prophecy of the stargazers and soothsayers and wise women was an idle superstition, and he is glad that he liveth.

CHRONICLES OF THE PEOPLE OF UZZ

BEHOLD, there was a nation which dwelt in a fair land, a land blessed with much abundance, with fertile valleys and mountains rich in gold and silver, iron and copper. And this nation had become great among the nations of the earth, by the diligence of its people, who tilled their fields and tended their vineyards, delved in the mines and toiled in the factories, so that every one had food to eat and fine garments to wear and a pleasant abode to dwell.

Now after a time, because the people were so diligent and the land so fertile, and because the people were also ingenious and found ways to lessen their labor, the products of that land became more and more abundant. Then arose one of the tribes and said: "It is not necessary to labor as long as the people in this land have been laboring, for we have produced a surplus. Therefore we, the tribe of traders, will cease from producing, for the others can produce enough to provide for us, and even more than that, which we can carry to foreign countries and exchange for the produce of those lands across the sea." And they did accordingly.

So after a time the people of that land were still laboring as diligently as they had been laboring aforetime, and the traders did wax fat and prosper, and got the people to build them many ships in which to carry to foreign parts the surplus products for sale. And these ships did fly in every harbor of every

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ocean the flag of that people, and the traders said: "Verily, we are a mighty people, for all the nations of the world buy from us, and our people are so diligent that we can sell cheaply and abundantly. Indeed, if we were not wise in our generation and made the prices higher in our own land, our own people would buy so many of these things themselves that there would be much less to export. But our own people, having what they desire, would then labor less, and there would be still less to export, which would be a sore blow to the prosperity of all traders, wherefore we permit it not to come to pass."

And they paid scribes to write proverbs and prophecies, to explain to the people how good it was to pay high prices at home and sell much goods abroad, because if you must pay high prices you must receive high wages, and it is better to pay ten shekels for one ham than to receive ten hams for one shekel, because shekels are better than hams, and there are nine hams left to sell abroad for the profit of the traders, so that the flag of the people can fly in the harbor of every ocean. For know ye not, said the scribes and prophets, that your flag flying in Hong Kong is better than ham frying in Oshkosh? And the people were comforted, and labored more diligently to build more ships and make more flags for the traders.

Now after a time the traders of other nations became equally eager to sell the surplus of the fields and mines of their people, and the traders of one land

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became wroth with the traders of the other land. So they spat upon each other's flags.

Then the traders of the great nation went home and declared through the scribes and the prophets unto all the people: "Lo, your holy flag has been spat upon by infidels. Will ye suffer this? If ye do not avenge this insult, we cannot sell them any more of the surplus ye produce. Then will ye starve, and your children will starve likewise, and the goods ye produce will rot upon the docks, unless ye take swords and slay these infidels who have spat upon your holy flag. If ye slay them without mercy, they will honor your flag and permit us to sell the wares ye produce as aforetime."

Then the chiefs of the people, who had been chosen from among the scribes and prophets, said unto the people: "It is for this that we have taken every tenth man of you and set him aside and given him a sword. And it is for this that ye have had to labor every tenth day for nothing in order to feed and clothe the soldiers with swords. And it is for this that we have taken every seventh man of you to build ships of war, and to cast cannon, and to become sailors and soldiers of the sea. And it is for this that ye have had to labor every seventh day for nothing in order to feed and clothe the men of your ships of war. Now will we go forth with your army and your ships of war, and with swords and cannon will we cause them to honor our flag and to purchase abundantly of our merchandise."

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Then the drums beat, and the flags waved, and the soldiers marched, and the ships sailed.

And when the army came to foreign parts, the infidels smote the army, and not one man escaped.

And when the ships of war came to foreign harbors, the infidels sank the ships, and all the men thereon were drowned, and even the holy flags were submerged beneath the waves of the ocean.

And the chiefs of the people, who had gone with the army and the ships of war, were also slain and drowned and did not return.

Whereat there was great wailing and mourning in the land.

But on the tenth day one of the people said: "Lo, we have not this army any longer to feed and clothe, and now we can labor for ourselves, or make holiday and sit in the sun."

And on the seventh day one of the people said: "Lo, we have not these ships any longer to keep in repair, nor the sailors and soldiers of them to feed and clothe, and now we can labor for ourselves, or make holiday and sit in the sun."

But the traders said: "Fools, ye produce much merchandise—garments, and jewels, and foods, and plows, and watches, and pianos, and shoes, and books. Where will ye sell this merchandise now? And who will be your chiefs? And how shall the stain be purged from your flags, which have been spat upon by the infidel?"

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Then one of the people said: "Upon the tenth day and upon the seventh day we will ourselves enjoy the abundance of merchandise we produce—the garments and jewels and foods we will keep for ourselves, and the plows shall furrow our own fields, and the watches shall tell us the time of day, and the pianos shall adorn our own parlors, and the shoes we shall dance in, and the books shall be read by us to make us wiser than we were. For we were sorely lacking in wisdom that we fed and clothed an idle army and built useless ships, in order that ye might sell to other nations the things we lacked ourselves. As for our chiefs, whose main business was to invent new taxes for us to pay and new crimes for us to fall into, we are glad we are rid of them. As for our flags, which the infidels have spat upon, ye traders, having no longer anything to do, may sit in the market place all day long and spit upon the flags of the infidels, and thus shall we be revenged."

Even thus it came to pass. And the nation grew greater and happier than it had been before. And every year, upon the day when their army and ships of war were completely destroyed, and they could no longer send abroad their merchandise for other people to use, upon that day they make holiday and rejoice greatly. It is called the day of liberation and the beginning of abundance. And that people is the wisest and the happiest and the most blessed of all peoples in the world.

THE PARABLE OF THE BULL AND THE RED RAG

IN the land of the Boobs there dwelt aforetime a wise man who had some foolish nephews. And when he heard how foolish the sons of his brother were, he was moved to teach them wisdom. So he went unto their abode and said: Come with me, O ye sons of folly, and we shall learn many things.

Then he went with them unto a place where there were thousands of sheep. And these sheep marched past in a long file, each following after the other, thousands of them.

And the wise man said: What think ye of these sheep? They are going to the butcher. He will cut their throats, and they will be mutton. Yet they march meekly onward toward the axe.

Then said the wise man's nephews: Forsooth, they are foolish sheep and know no better than to follow one after the other. They deserve to have their throats cut for their folly.

But the wise man said: Have ye not gone into the king's army, and will ye not go to war just as these sheep are going to the slaughter-house? Will ye not follow after the fool that walketh before ye? Wherein, then, are ye wiser than the poor sheep? Wise men stand alone, or go their own way. Mutton men walk in parades, like unto the sheep or the goose, which animals they despise.

PARABLE OF THE BULL AND THE RED RAG

Next the wise man took his nephews unto a Bull Ring, where a great multitude was assembled to see the bulls fight. And they saw how the bulls became enraged when the bull-fighters waved a red flag. With great fury the bulls charged upon the waving of the flag, and when their fury had made them blind the bulls were killed.

And the wise man said: What think ye of these bulls? A square of red cloth enrages them so they go unheedingly into death. What think ye of them?

Then said the wise man's nephews: Forsooth, they are stupid beasts, and have not the gift of reason as we have. Therefore they become enraged when a red rag is waved, and rush blindly to fight. They deserve to be made carrion for their stupidity.

But the wise man said: Will not ye rush into fight blindly even so when a square of colored cloth is waved before ye? The bull is enraged by the red alone, but ye are roused to fury by the white and the blue also. There is but little difference in color sense between ye and that mad bull. Mayhap the bull thinketh ye are stupid beasts for rushing into battle for colors that are not red.

Then the wise man's nephews said unto each other: This our uncle thinketh he is wise, but he is exceeding foolish. We will report his sayings to the king, and the king will teach him wisdom. And they did even so, and the king cast the wise man into prison for speaking treason. But his nephews he honored for their loyalty, and put them in the front rank of

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his army, and they were great heroes, and they fell on the field of glory, and their graves wherein they rest are adorned with tombstones of fine marble.

But the wise man in prison wrote a book on "The Cure of Folly." And when his book was opened by the keeper of the library, all the pages thereof were blank and void.

And the merchants of mutton, the makers of flags, the owners of the bull-ring, the carvers of tombstones, and other tradesmen and artisans rejoiced greatly, and said: Woe unto the prophet, but hail unto the profit! What is meet for the sheep and the bull, is meat for us! There is magical potency in color, especially in the yellow of gold and the green of banknotes. Great is Allah, who hath created for us the bulls, and the sheep, and the sons of the wise man's brother.

A STREET IN JERUSALEM

THEY had moved along sedately, their bearded heads wagging in gleeful animation, until they came to the House of the High Priest. There they stopped, to say whatever was left to say, before departing to their several abodes. A young woman, comely to look upon, had followed a short stone's throw behind them, and now she came a little nearer, bending her ear to listen.

"It is a good work we have done," declared the lean Pharisee, with a grating laugh. "It will teach these alien agitators a lesson they should have been taught long ago. They come here from rebellious Galilee, from idolatrous Samaria, and other barbaric regions, to find fault with our sacred institutions. If Zion pleases them not, they should go back whence they came. Some of you have cried out to expel them; some of you thought we could make them like unto us by compelling them to learn our language and adopt our customs. Both proposals are futile, as our experience during the past months has shown. One way alone there is to deal with them—as we have dealt with this fellow. His ragged crew will take warning at his cross. We are rid of the whole undesirable rabble, and incidentally we have shown the Roman governor our loyalty to Caesar, may he break his accursed neck!"

"It was a splendid thought," said the fat Scribe, "to dwell upon the fellow's pretensions to royal lineage.

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Perhaps he really believed that God had given him power over all races and peoples. He may have been mad. But such madmen are dangerous; they must be muzzled. Verily, I believe that the mouths of prophets should be permitted to prophesy, but when any mouth utters such prophecies as he spouted forth, standing upon whatever he could find at any cross-road, then, in the name of Law and Religion, he must be silenced. Such things might be permitted in the days of Amos, but nowadays we cannot have discontent fanned into disorder by pestilent breeders of strife. A king, forsooth, to reign over all kingdoms! Our holy nation, to him, was no better than any other nation, though Jehovah had chosen it and set it apart as his own. This leveler would make of us one nation with other nations, and would rule over all. Treason and blasphemy! Would God choose one of those unkempt wanderers, preachers of sedition, who could not make a living in their own land, who come down to Jerusalem, the city of God, to enjoy our liberty and to partake of our prosperity—would God choose such a one and set him to rule over us?"

"These discontented fellows are both cunning and desperate," now spake the High Priest. "My loyal spies have kept me well informed of their activities. They have held many secret meetings where they ate food in common while plotting mischief and abominations. Their public gatherings could be forbidden by the magistrates or broken up by soldiers of the legion,

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for the power of God resides in magistrates and soldiers. But these clandestine assemblages in upper rooms, or out on the hills, it is very difficult to root out. That mad fellow on the cross had a manner of speaking as if he spoke the truth, which caused the multitude to follow him and listen eagerly to his absurd theories. Have you heard that story he told about some laborers in a vineyard? What, you do not know that foolish tale? How those who came in the last hour should receive the same hire as those who have toiled and sweated all day? Such tales would make all the workers in our vineyards shirk and grumble. They would band together, scowl and murmur, and refuse to labor the full number of hours. The greatness and the glory of Jerusalem the Golden rest upon the glad obedience of our workers, and whoever undermines their spirit of willing service is an enemy of the people."

"And of God," echoed the Pharisee. "But this pestilent fellow was not content with sowing seeds of idleness in our workers' hearts, by telling them to take no thought for the morrow. If that were all, it might have been endured. There are indeed more laborers than enough, if all work faithfully the entire day. If any toiler leaves the post where God has placed him, throws down the tools God has put into his hands, there may be a needier one to take his place for smaller hire; and by hiring this needier one for the work we are indeed doing a deed of charity, and gain more treasure to bring tithes into the Temple,

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and to reward the magistrate who punishes the lazy drone that left the vineyard. But that disturber, whose mouth we stopped none too soon, preached against the rich and the respectable; he told the rabble that such as these would be cast into hell-fire unless they sold all they had and gave it to the poor."

"He was a smooth demagogue," hissed the Scribe. "He preached non-resistance, a most insidious doctrine in what it leads to. Turning the other cheek if some one smites us—what would become of Rome's legions if that damnable doctrine were instilled in the hearts of the soldiers? It is not even expedient to teach unto soldiers the commandment of Moses, 'Thou shalt not kill!' without explaining to them that it does not apply to soldiers. Whoever undermines the discipline of the army, whoever teaches young men that the soldier's calling is idleness when it is not murder, murder when it is not idleness, such an one is striking at the very root and foundation of social order. What if the peasants were to rise up and say, 'We will send no more good food to Jerusalem for their bad laws?' how could we rebuke them, how teach them their duty in the sight of God, without the sword as a symbol of His wrath?"

"The peasants haven't that much sense," said the High Priest with a laugh. "But men who teach such doctrines of destruction must be themselves destroyed. This fellow's pretense of meekness, after all, was merely a sham. You have not heard how he drove some of our wealthy tradesmen out of the

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Temple with a scourge, and overturned their tables? It may be that there was some slight reason for complaint against those tradesmen, who were demanding ever greater gains for their wares. But if citizens of Jerusalem, not outsiders, had complained to me in a spirit of due docility, I should have seen what remedy might be devised. It may be that those tradesmen, each striving to sell most, made much chatter and clatter by unseemly chaffering in the holy place. But there is a tribunal before which complaints can be brought; there is an orderly procedure of law which must be followed; and whoever takes the law into his own hands, whoever commits violence, becomes himself a law-breaker greater than those he would chastise. This incident, which you may not have heard, shows that the fellow on the cross was really a menace to our city's peace, and seized every opportunity to interfere with the business of our merchants, who pay tithes liberally. Besides, one of my loyal spies reported to me that he counseled his followers to sell their cloaks and buy swords, and he often talked of destroying the Temple itself and rebuilding it in three days."

"Destroy the Temple?"

"Rebuild it in three days?"

"Merely another of his mad sayings. Our laws, which have stood the test of ages, he would supersede by a new law. Our wisdom, which a thousand rabbins have received from on high, he would confuse with his feeble folly. Our constituted authorities he

would ignore, and proclaim himself king. Would he set his babble of righteousness above our ancient and holy religion? Our investigation showed what the fellow really was; it made clear the full menace of his teaching, and proved he was a propagandist of the most dangerous type. We are indeed well rid of him!"

"Even so, well rid of him! We would be well rid of all these meddling strangers from Nazareth, and Galilee, and Samaria!"

"Verily, rid of him at last, and rid of him for good!"

The young woman, who had stopped some twenty paces away, had come closer and listened to most of their discourse. Now, as they were departing, each toward his home, she came into their midst.

"Ye are wise and holy men," she said gently; "may an humble handmaiden speak a word with you?"

"The street is not a place for petitions," answered the High Priest—not unkindly, for she was young and comely.

"No petition do I bear," she replied; "craving neither alms nor justice I stand before you."

"Then, daughter, what wouldst thou?"

"I would explain to you what he really meant of whom you have been speaking—and would bear witness what he did for me, a sinner and an outcast. I would tell you who he really was."

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"Daughter, get thee home! We know too well what he was. A foreigner who came among us to stir up trouble. Born in a stable, an ordinary workingman without any schooling to give him wisdom, he took delight in causing a sensation and imposing upon the credulity of fisherfolk and gullible peasants. A fellow without a home, without regular work, without a purpose in life but to hear himself talk! Such people are harmless until they secure a crowd of rebellious followers who believe in them and whose applause incites them to ever greater folly. Then the righteous men whom God has blessed with authority and riches must act to protect themselves against violence and robbery, which would become common if such fellows are permitted to wag their loose tongues."

"Know you not his parentage is divine—that his kingdom will endure forever—that he is the Prince of Peace?"

"Prince of Peace!" sneered the Scribe. "More of his insidious doctrine to corrupt the strength of our armies. Our God is a man of war; through war he hath given us Canaan for our inheritance. Yet these dreamers rail against war! Have not all our wars been righteous wars, since our God granted us the victory? Do not prate of blessed peace, when gainful trade rusts, and valor decays, and the common people, having nought else to do, breed civil strife. Is it not better they should hate and kill those of another nation, than to cause murmuring and tumult

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at home against their rulers? If the common people have too much peace, they do not appreciate its blessings. If they have no foreign enemies to hate, they will hate us who sit over them."

"He commanded us to love, not to hate. He told us of a surety that—"

"His boasts have all come to naught—his career has ended in shame and torture—his followers are scared and scattered—his seditious teachings will be disseminated no longer. What a man owneth will still be secure; the Law that has endured a thousand years will not be annulled by the frothings of a foreigner; the Wise shall still sit in the seats of the mighty, and the sword shall uphold the councils of wisdom. If you were one of that fellow's misguided followers, damsel, get to your home! He has failed—he hangs upon the cross, and his silly words are choked in blood."

A captain of the guard came running toward them from the east.

"Something has happened," he cried out to the High Priest. "The great curtain of the Temple has been torn."

"This is a plot of revenge," ground out the Scribe. "Some of those foreign curs have done this."

"I know not whether my body trembles with anger," declared the Pharisee, "or whether the solid earth beneath my feet shakes with a fever."

"The curtain of your mysteries is rent," the young woman cried; "and they are mysterious no longer.

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The sinner can see as clearly as you of the Sanhedrin. Your solid earth is rocking under your sandals; all you deemed firm and stablished upon a rock shall pass away! Ye have not slain him, because he is the Life. Ye have not silenced him, because he is the Law. Ye have not buried him, because he is the Truth."

"Hear her!" exclaimed the High Priest. "We'll have to crucify still more of the mad dogs. We'll have to throw still more of them into dungeons. Their damnable doctrine must be stamped out; these enemies of society must be extirpated. The lax and lenient Sadducees would merely expel them—that is not effective! You, worthy Scribe, would but suppress their writings—that, too, is a makeshift. There is only one cure for such fermenters of misrule—to stamp them out! Stamp them out!"

"By stamping upon fire you do but scatter it," remonstrated the young woman. "That is the folly of fools!"

"I pity thee, O misguided daughter," rejoined the Priest, as he entered his palace. "Go, before you are seized as an accomplice of that alien agitator, that stirrer of discontent, that reviler of our ancient customs, that enemy of morals and religion, of law and order, of Caesar and God! Go, get you hence! Your prophet is done for!"

The door of the High Priest's palace closed behind him.

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"Yea, he is done for, daughter!" echoed the Pharisee. "We shall hear of him no more. Get you home!" And he gat him home, rubbing his lean paws gleefully.

"Done for, indeed!" declared the Scribe. "And his nefarious doctrine has been stamped out. His world dominion has come to naught. We shall hear of him no more! Thus perish all the foes of law and order, of piety and patriotism. Thus be it done to all the enemies of God and man."

And the Scribe proceeded on his way.

The young woman stood in the street alone, her eyes shining.

"Nevertheless," she said, "I will go and see where they have buried him. The earth trembles. I will go out among the tombs and wait until the sunrise."

A SHORT POLITICAL CATECHISM

EVERY year comes a time when the Candidate is afield, gunning for the unwary Voter. Politicians know that the first plausible person who asks a citizen to vote for him will very likely secure that man's promise. This is the fatal flaw in our politics. We should promise no man our vote until we know what other men are going to run for the office; we should promise no man our vote unless we know where he stands on the issues of the day. Alas, most of us do not know where we ourselves stand on the issues of the day, and in order to clarify our convictions and set forth reasons for the faith within us this attempt at a short political catechism is presented.

Of course this Catechism is adapted to present conditions and present perils. If it has more of the spirit of protest in it than such a document would have had ten years ago, that is because during these years our Overlords have become much more arrogant, their exactions more galling, their legislation more iniquitous, than in any previous period of the nation's history. Hence we should know what we want, what we do not want, and why—and we should inform the candidate who seeks our votes just where we stand. This Catechism will help us to know it for ourselves.

Question. Why do we oppose all new taxes?

Answer. Because the people are staggering under the burden of present taxes, and business is paralyzed

A SHORT POLITICAL CATECHISM

when the man of moderate means, after paying his taxes, has nothing left to spend on himself and his family.

Q. What should be done with present taxes?

A. As fast as possible, while meeting all just obligations of the government, they should be reduced or removed, because they are draining the blood of industry and fattening a horde of political parasites who produce nothing.

Q. Why do we oppose new bond issues?

A. Because they tie up money in unproductive investments, unless they are for educational purposes; because they inflate and depreciate our currency by pyramiding debts; because they encourage the waste of public money by putting the payment on future generations.

Q. Why do we favor a drastic reduction of army and navy?

A. Because every soldier has to be fed by a worker, and produces nothing himself. Military establishments are a perpetual incitement to war, an agency of domestic oppression, a relic of monarchial despotism, and put false ideals of glory and honor into the minds of impressionable youth. Chiefly they are objectionable because of their tremendous waste, while they produce nothing except a crop of mediocre generals and pompous colonels.

Q. Why do we favor free speech?

A. So that we can tell what burdens we bear, what wrongs we suffer, what redress we demand.

A SHORT POLITICAL CATECHISM

Q. Why should any one oppose free speech?

A. Because it might tell the truth about him.

Q. Why do we favor a free press?

A. Because censorship is stupid; because it is essentially an attempt to keep the people ignorant, and because free speech without a free press is of little avail to spread knowledge among the people, knowledge which is the lifeblood of democracy.

Q. Why should any one oppose a free press?

A. Because it might print the truth about him, exposing his incompetence, graft, and abuse of power.

Q. Why do we favor free assembly?

A. Because in union there is strength, and free speech without free assembly might as well be uttered in the wilderness.

Q. Why should any one oppose free assembly?

A. Because tyrants know their tenure of power depends upon the policy of "Divide and conquer." As long as people cannot get together, they are an easy prey to unscrupulous masters.

Q. Does the Constitution grant the people these rights?

A. It does, but the Constitution was abrogated during the reign of Woodrow I.

Q. What must the people do?

A. Demand the full measure of all their rights until the Constitution has been restored as the Palladium of our liberties.

Q. Why do we oppose tariffs?

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A. Because they are taxation of the most iniquitous kind, levied for the protection of robbers. They strangle competition and foster monopoly. They compel the consumer to pay the dividends of the big trusts. They levy an invisible tribute upon all who buy any article in the tariff schedule. They restrain our liberty to buy in the best and cheapest markets. They put up the cost of living for all the people, in order to increase the profits of a few. They create an artificial crime—smuggling—and necessitate the employment of an army of parasites to collect the revenue, people who produce nothing and are maintained out of the labor of those who do produce.

Q. Why do we oppose subsidies?

A. Because they take money from all the people to insure the profits of a few. Because it is the encouragement of waste and inefficiency for the government to guarantee any industry against loss, and because it is unjust discrimination for the government to guarantee one class of investors unless it guarantees all classes of business men against loss and the laborer against unemployment.

Q. Why do we oppose immigration laws, except such as exclude paupers and criminals?

A. Because every immigrant is immediately a buyer of American goods and a producer of American goods for sale; because every one who works adds to the wealth of the country; because one human being is as good as another, and we believe in equal opportunity for all; because the opposition to immi-

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gration is based upon selfish grounds by short-sighted labor agitators, and upon religious and racial hatreds unworthy of our democratic ideals.

Q. Why do we protest against racial discrimination?

A. Because one race has the same rights any other race has, and because we should do unto others as we would have others do unto us.

Q. Why do we protest against language discrimination?

A. Because the more languages we know the more highly we are educated and civilized; because language discrimination puts a premium on ignorance; because ignorance is the mother of intolerance; but chiefly because every human being has the right to use any language he prefers, as he has the right to adopt any religion he believes, or to eat any food he finds to his taste.

Q. Has he the right to eat any food he finds to his taste?

A. He has not if that food is in liquid form and contains a stimulating element in excess of a virtuous minimum.

Q. How was he deprived of this right?

A. By adding unto the guarantees of liberty in the Constitution one institute of slavery, the Eighteenth Amendment.

Q. Why do we oppose the Eighteenth Amendment?

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A. Because it deprives human beings of a natural right; because it nullifies other guarantees of the Constitution; because it breeds hypocrisy, espionage, graft and crime; because it requires for its enforcement a horde of parasites who rapidly degenerate into worse grafters; and because it creates a dangerous precedent, upon which a hundred other invasions of liberty, other agencies of coercion and confiscation, can be erected.

Q. Why do we oppose Blue Laws?

A. For the same reasons just given, to which might be added the fundamental human reason that the pursuit of happiness is no crime, and those who oppose it are enemies of the human race.

Q. What immediate steps should be taken to promote prosperity, happiness, justice, and fraternity in the United States and in the whole world?

A. We should introduce administrative economy; we should repeal all petty legislation; we should simplify judicial procedure; we should take effective steps to reduce prices of food and clothing, rents and public service charges. We should discourage every propaganda of hate and prejudice, leveled against any race, any religion, any language, any nationality; and all such propaganda designed to involve us in war—with Mexico, Japan, or any other nation—should be branded as criminal folly. We should withdraw our soldiers and marines from Haiti, the Philippines, or any other quarters of the globe where they have no business, and should put them

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at useful tasks like house-painting or road-building in the United States. We should liberate from our prisons all men and women who are rotting in dungeons for expressing their opinions or daring to think. We should stop talking so much about Americanism, and should begin a new chapter of our history that will cause other nations to talk about Americanism as a desirable ideal.

Q. Anything else?

A. The above will suffice for the candidate, who will conclude that you know too much, and that he can get votes easier somewhere else.



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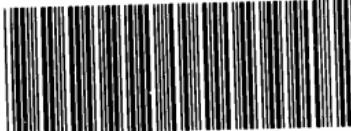
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